

Petition - School Crossing Patrollers Cosham (summary)

- Overview

Lead petitioner: Mrs Eileen Peaston
Received: 21 January 2014
Confirmed signatories: 580
Officer response: Amber Kerens Bathmaker (HoS Simon Moon) on 20 January 2014
Council meeting: 11 February 2014

- Statement

"Bring back a school crossing patroller to the Lonsdale Road/Court Lane junction Cosham and Hilary Avenue/Court Lane Junction Cosham"

- Officer response (20 January 2014)

Dear Ms Peaston,

SCP PETITION - COURT LANE

I am writing in response to your petition for School Crossing Patrollers in Cosham. This is a follow up to the acknowledgment from Democratic Services, and seeks to provide an update to the situation outside Court Lane School.

During December we held interviews for patrollers and identified two candidates to cover the junctions identified within your petition. We have offered posts to two of these candidates both of whom have accepted subject to checks.

We are currently awaiting criminal record checks for both candidates and will appoint subject to a clean return from DBS.

Please feel free to contact me to discuss further if required.

Yours sincerely,

Amber Kerens Bathmaker
Road Safety & Active Travel Manager

- Council response

RESOLVED that

There are 3 designated School Crossing Patrol Officers (SCPO) for the Court Lane & Lonsdale Road sites.

In September as a result of resignations over the summer holidays the Council's School Crossing Patrol Officer Co-ordinator (SCPOC) moved the SCPO at Court Lane / Lonsdale Avenue to cover the vacancy at Solent Road, leaving one SCPO on that site. This was an operational decision based upon the SCPOC's professional assessment of the need to ensure the most effective child safety coverage.

She also moved one of the 2 SCPO's at Court Lane at this time, further to a direct request from that individual SCPO. The remaining SCPO resigned at Christmas leaving the site vacant.

Interviews for the School Crossing Patrollers at Court Lane / Hilary Avenue and Court Lane / Lonsdale Avenue were held on the 18th December as a result of which conditional offers of employment were made to 2 individuals - subject to satisfactory DBS and reference checks. These interviews were discussed at the T&T meeting on the 19th December where an information paper on SCPO recruitment was presented.

On 19 December the school was informed that these offers had been made with the intention of getting these two vacancies covered as soon as possible.

A call, from the lady who had arranged the petition, was also made on the 19th December, to the School Crossing Patrol Co-ordinator, she wished to make a complaint about the lack of SCPO's at Court Lane. She was informed of the conditional offers that had been made on the previous day, she stated that she would still be presenting her petition at the Council Meeting in January.

Recruitment completed the DBS forms and reference requests and sent them off before Christmas, although one of the 2 has only resided in the UK since 2013 and therefore the DBS check only covers that period. This means that in addition we require a Certificate of Good Conduct from the relevant Embassy to ensure that we have the relevant checks in place, additionally we are waiting for satisfactory references from both candidates, and HR Recruitment continues to chase these.

As I explained to members only two meetings ago the vacancy situation for SCPO's continues to be actively pursued by PCC. Unfortunately, like many other local authorities, we simply do not get sufficient suitable applicants as many people choose not to apply because of the nature of the role, i.e. working in all weathers, shift times, lack of hours and impact on benefits, locations available etc.

Ideally PCC would like to ensure coverage at all of its recognised sites but the problems with recruitment and retention of staff effectively prevents such. At present there are around 30 vacancies for SCPO's and the budget for their recruitment and retention remains. The Traffic & Transportation service remains committed to filling these vacancies as quickly as it can, as has been previously explained to the School and to the petitioner.

